REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified patent application is respectfully requested.

In response to the Official Action, claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, and 20 have been canceled.

Claims 1, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 21 have been amended as set forth above. In addition, new

claims 22-23 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13-19, and 21-23 are

pending in the application.

Claims 1-5 and 11-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being

unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,982,994, hereinafter "Mori" in view of U.S. Patent

No. 5,937,148, hereinafter "Okazawa."

The Examiner alleges that Mori teaches a printer server (Figure 55), at least one

printer (Figure 55), and a plurality of computers (Figure 55). Each of these elements are

disclosed in Figure 55, and thus refer to a second embodiment of the application.

The Examiner then further discusses the computers by reference to Figure 21,

which refers to a different embodiment than that of Figure 55. This distinction is

significant in that Figure 55 discloses an embodiment having a server that relies upon

terminals 152a, 152b, 152c. In contrast to the second embodiment disclosed in Figure 55,

the first embodiment does not include a server, and relies upon computers or workstations,

instead of terminals.

With regard to the claimed status monitor for each of the computers, the Examiner

refers to the GUI in Figure 21, and alleges that it displays the "status" of the printers

connected to the print server. The information available through the GUI in Figure 21 is

set forth in column 18, lines 33 - column 19, line 26. With regard to the status of the

printer, the Examiner's attention is directed to the information described in column 19, lines 17-26. The only status information available is the usage ratio of the printer, the amount of remaining paper, the amount of remaining toner, system log information, and memory damping. Clearly, Mori does not teach or suggest the monitoring of the waiting time status of the printers.

Furthermore, the Examiner concedes that Mori does not teach or suggest the job observation module. To overcome this deficiency, the Examiner relies upon the teachings of Okazawa. Okazawa teaches that, in response to receipt of printing data, or in response to an inquiry from the host computer, the status of a printer can be obtained. See Step 11 in Figure 4 and the related description at column 7, lines 51-56. See also Step 21 in Figure 5 and the related description thereof at column 8, lines 26-38.

Accordingly, Okazawa only teaches that the status of the printers is obtained upon receipt of printing data or a request from a host computer. And, more significantly, Okazawa does not teach simultaneously sending the status of the printers to a plurality of computers connected to the print server. Claims 1, 11, and 22 now include simultaneous notification.

Furthermore, the Examiner concedes that neither Mori nor Okazawa teach or suggest "a waiting time for the printer which is displayed in the status monitor." See the comments in the Official Action concerning claim 6.

The Examiner alleges that U.S. Patent No. 5,669,040, hereinafter Hisatake, teaches a waiting time for the printer which is displayed in the status monitor. To support this determination, the Examiner refers to U32 and U16 in Figure 14 of Hisatake. However, a

careful review of Hisatake indicates that Hisatake also does not teach the monitoring of a waiting time for the printer. Hisatake determines whether there are any jobs in processing and whether there are any jobs that are waiting for processing. However, Hisatake does not appear to teach or suggest the waiting time for a printer.

Although there is no specific discussion therein, it appears from Figure 14, that Hisatake may reveal the number of pages in the particular print job. However, given that each printer may print at a different speed, and that each page may take a different amount of time, Hisatake does not teach or suggest a waiting time for the print jobs. Thus, it is not possible, from looking at Hisatake, to determine which printer may be available first.

Accordingly, none of the references (Mori, Okazawa, or Hisatake) teach or suggest the subject matter of now-amended claims 6, 10, 15, 16, 21, and 23, which monitor the waiting time status of a printer, and display the waiting time status of the printer to all computers connected to the print server.

Accordingly, the amended claims 1 and 11 are now clearly patentable over the cited prior art.

Dependent claims 1, 4, 6, 10, 13-19, 21, and 23 are also patentable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to the independent claims.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this Amendment, or the

application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned

attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment to Amendment dated September 24, 2001

Mark-up of Claims 1, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 21

1.   (Amended) A print system, comprising:

a print server;

[at least one printer] a plurality of printers connected to the print server;

a plurality of computers connected to the print server;

the print server includes a job observation [stationary] module for monitoring the

status of the plurality of printers [printer] connected to the print server; and

each of the computers includes a status monitor for displaying the status which is

sent simultaneously from the print server to each of the computers [of the printer connected

to the print server].

10. (Amended) The print system of claim 1, wherein the print server includes means for

calculating a waiting time for availability of each of the plurality of printers [printer].

11. (Amended) A method of controlling a print system, comprising the steps of:

obtaining [monitoring] a status of a plurality of printers [at least one printer] with a

print server; and

simultaneously sending the obtained status of the plurality of printers [printer] to a

plurality of computers connected to the print server, the status being displayed at each of

the plurality of computers[; and displaying the status of the printer connected to the print

server].

Attachment to Amendment dated September 24, 2001

Mark-up of Claims 1, 10, 11, 13, 16, and 21

13. (Amended) The method of claim 11 [12], further comprising the step of designating a

particular one of the plurality of printers for a particular print job.

16. (Amended) The method of claim 11 [12], further comprising the step of displaying on

at least one of the plurality of computers an operating condition, a trouble condition, and a

waiting time for each of the plurality of printers.

21. (Amended) The method of claim 11 [12], further comprising the step of calculating a

waiting time for availability of each of the plurality of printers.